

## **Minutes**

Citizen's District Council Meeting  
City of Muskegon CDBG  
Zoom Meeting  
Muskegon, Michigan  
March 2, 2021

### **CALL TO ORDER:**

The meeting was called to order by Jeremy Lenertz at 5:39 pm.

### **ROLL CALL:**

Roll call was taken by Samantha Pulos, and a quorum was present. (Location of each person in attendance are noted following their name.)

#### ➤ **Present:**

- ✓ Jennifer Ross – City of Muskegon
- ✓ Marie Cisneros - City of Muskegon/Nims Neighborhood
- ✓ Perry Dennie – City of Muskegon
- ✓ Jeremy Lenertz – City of Muskegon/McLaughlin Neighborhood
- ✓ Paul Kurdziel – City of Muskegon
- ✓ Ken Johnson – Commissioner – City of Muskegon/Nims Neighborhood

#### ➤ **Absent:**

- ✓ Veania Coleman

#### ➤ **Excused:**

- ✓ Ationza Smith

#### ➤ **Staff Present:**

- ✓ LeighAnn Mikesell – City of Muskegon
- ✓ Samantha Pulos – City of Muskegon
- ✓ Oneata Bailey – City of Muskegon
- ✓ Sharonda Carson – City of Muskegon

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

A motion to approve the minutes from February 2, 2021 (Action Item) was made by Paul Kurdziel; Marie Cisneros seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

### **OLD BUSINESS:**

The tentative meeting schedule for 2021 was discussed, including mention of cancelling the November 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting due to the election, as well as the August 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting because of the observance of National Night Out.

A motion to approve the 2021 meeting schedule was made by Paul Kurdziel; Jennifer Ross seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Samantha Pulos stated that according to previous minutes, Jeremy was vice-chair and that the CDC had not elected another chair after the resignation of Kim Burr. The group agreed that they will elect a chair that next time that CDC meets.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

Small Business Retail Report: LeighAnn Mikesell reported to the group the program was developed in conjunction with COVID funds and was passed through the City Commission. The CDC members were provided with a list of applicants, although only one had been approved at this point. Jeremy Lenertz asked if the program was target for retailers, not restaurants. LeighAnn confirmed that was correct and that the program was drafted before the onset of COVID to help downtown retail growth, which has struggled compared to the restaurant base. If restaurants will be accepted into the program, there will be restrictions against chain business. If the changes are approved by commission, they will be advertised to inform the community. The applications are available on the city's website at: <https://www.muskegon-mi.gov/resources/Small%20Retailer%20Assistance%20Grant%20Application.pdf>. Paul Kurdziel asked if this was for established businesses or more of a seed grant. LeighAnn answered that originally it was for seed money, but that COVID made expansions to help brick and mortar businesses survive.

Budget: Sharonda Carson explained each category of the budget and explained that a letter received from HUD has given the City more flexibility in spending funds to address AIDS, Climate Change and people experiencing homelessness. Jeremy asked if the \$794k received were extra above and beyond the budget categories discussed. Oneata Bailey explained that they are part of the 2020 funding but have not been spent yet. Paul asked how people are identified for needs and how people can gain access to their money? Oneata explained that the Public Notice (published on Mlive, Facebook, and the City's Website) will go out in the middle of March, soliciting partners to fund. Some potential partners are Goodwill and United Way and they may be assisted with childcare. Jeremy asked what the CDC's responsibility with the budget was going forward. Oneata answered that the survey that was sent to the CDC asks for the public's input for the Consolidated Plan (a collective effort with Muskegon Heights and Norton Shores, which we do because we essentially serve the same population) to improve the community and that the group will look at the comments and come up with a group of activities. Paul asks if someone has an idea that doesn't fit into the survey, how would that idea get to the City for consideration. Oneata answered that they can submit comments via the City's website, email, phone, or by the survey. Paul asked if any money has been allocated to persons or groups struggling with housing. Oneata answered that we already have agencies that do that in the community: Muskegon Continuum of Care and Community enCompass and that in 2019, HUD

said that older CDBG funds could be used to address homelessness through the Continuum of Care. She went on to say that we cannot duplicate service and in 20 years, we have not had the option to fund the Continuum of Care.

**STAFF REPORTS:**

Oneata stated that anything staff had to report was covered in Old Business and New Business.

**GENERAL DISCUSSION:**

Oneata mentioned that the group would receive survey (available the first 15 days of March about the Consolidated Plan and proposed activities) results to review before they met again.

**ADJOURN:**

Paul Kurdziel motioned to adjourn the meeting, Perry Dennie seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 6:25 pm.

**NEXT MEETING:**

The next meeting date is: April 6, 2021.